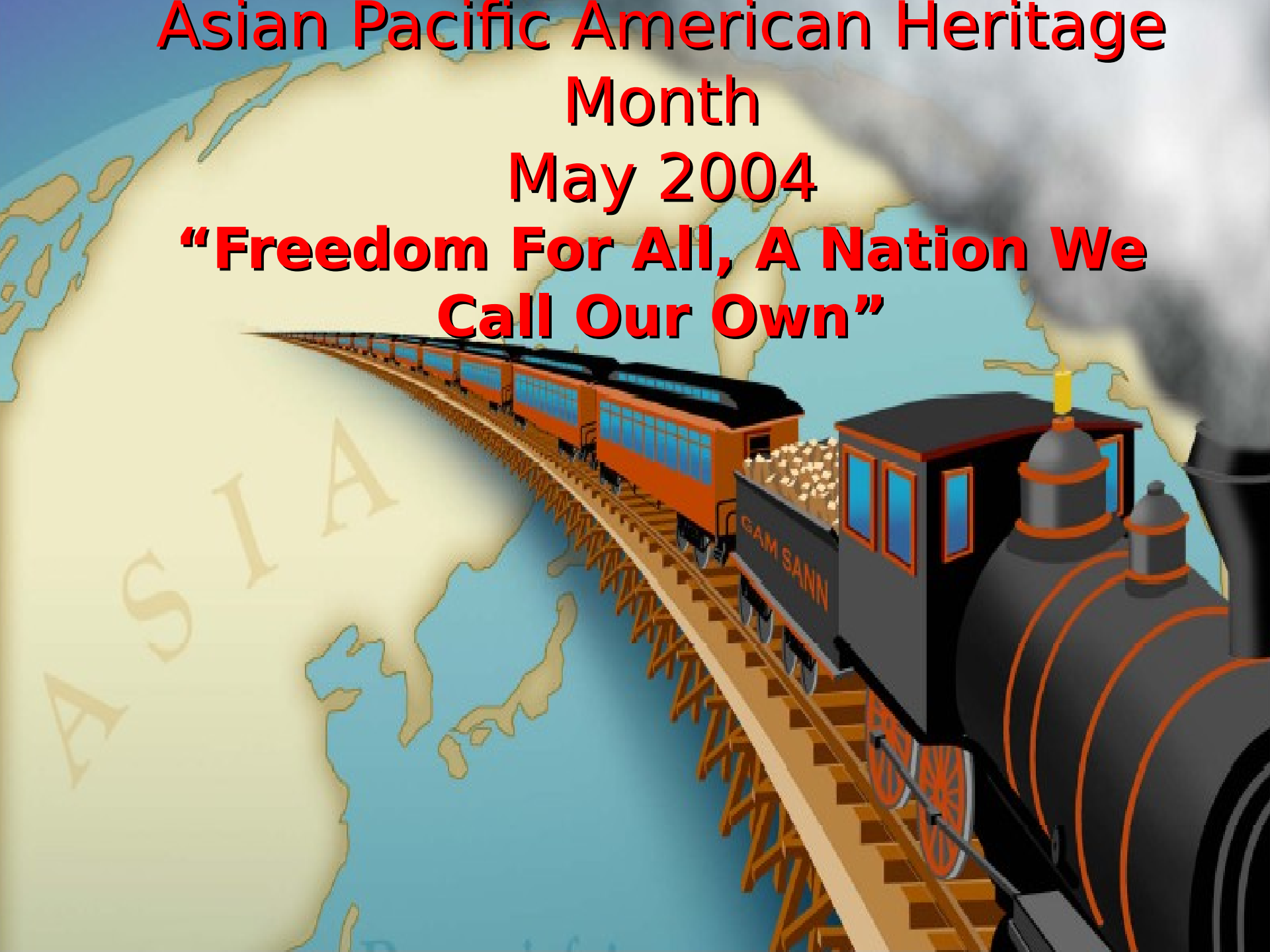


Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

May 2004

**“Freedom For All, A Nation We
Call Our Own”**



**Asian Pacific American Heritage Month
2004 Asian Pacific American Heritage Month National
Theme**

“Freedom For All, A Nation We Call Our Own”

- **The history of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month (APAHM) dates back to June 1977 when Congressman Frank Horton (R-NY) and Norman Mineta (D-CA) introduced House Resolution 540 into the House of Representatives. It called for the President to Proclaim the first week in May as Asian Pacific American Heritage Week. The following month, Senators Daniel Inouye and Spark Matsunaga introduced similar legislation into the US Senate. In October 1978, President James Earl (Jimmy) Carter Jr. signed Joint resolution 72 officially declaring the first week in May as Asian Pacific Heritage Week.**
- **Twelve years later, in May of 1990, President George Bush Sr. signed a proclamation expanding the weeklong celebration into a entire month. Two years after that, on October 23, 1992, the 102nd Congress unanimously approved and President George Bush signed into law House Resolution 5572, permanently designated the month of May as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month (APAHM).**

Asian Pacific Americans

- **Asian Pacific American is a term that attempts to give expression to cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity while recognizing common historical experiences in American history. Asian Pacific Americans include many ethnic groups with diverse backgrounds, histories, languages and cultures.**
- **The significance of this month can only be understood by recognizing the progression and convergence of the many diverse groups that make up the Asian Pacific American community, which includes Chinese Americans, Japanese Americans, Korean Americans, Vietnamese Americans, Asian Indian Americans, Filipino Americans, Cambodian Americans, Hmong Americans, Laotian Americans, Hawaiian Americans, Samoan Americans and Thai Americans, to name a few. The month of May is set aside to celebrate the collective accomplishments of these communities.**



Military History and Participation

- **Asian Pacific Americans have made remarkable contributions in many aspects of American life, including the arts, science, civics and government, education, sports, business and in the military. According to historical records, Asian-American military service dates back to the 19th century. Numerous Asian-Americans served in the U.S. military during World War I.**
- **Many Asian Pacific Americans served in combat units in the Korean War and have fought in many wars since then. Asian-Americans continue to keep alive the proud heritage and legacy of military service their predecessors established. There are currently more than 1,600 Asian-American officers and 8,100 enlisted members in the Air Force. Some have held key positions, such as Gen. Eric K. Shinseki, Army chief of staff.**

Asian Pacific American Women Military Service

- During the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, Asian Pacific American women continued to enter the military and work within civilian organizations affiliated with the military. For example, Ruth A. Tanaka joined the Army Nurse Corps in 1949 and retired as a lieutenant colonel.



- Chinese American Hazel Ying Lee was among 38 members of the Women Airforce Service Pilots, or WASPs, during World War II.





The Nation's Highest Military Award

The Medal of Honor

The Bravest of the Brave



***DANIEL K.
INOUE***

- Daniel K. Inouye, the third most senior member of the U.S. Senate, is known for his distinguished record as a legislative leader, and as a World War II combat veteran who earned the nation's highest award for military valor, the Medal of Honor.
- Senator Inouye has also championed the interests of Hawaii's people throughout his career. He was instrumental in engineering the restoration and return of Kahoolawe, the island that had been used for target practice by the U.S. military, to the State of Hawaii. He continues to press for the passage of legislation that would establish a process by which Hawaii's indigenous people would be able to form their own sovereign government.

Notable Asian Pacific Americans





Senator Spark Masayuki Matsunaga

"If in our teaching we emphasize the life and work of our great contributors... people will come to realize that moral courage is bravery of the highest type, and America will be called the Champion of Peace."

These words, written in 1938 by Spark Matsunaga when he was a young education major at the University of Hawaii, foreshadow the contributions he was to make during his outstanding career as attorney, public servant, and peace advocate.



Margaret Fung

As Executive Director of the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF), Margaret Fung is actively engaged in fostering a wide spectrum of legal rights for Asian Americans.

A graduate of Barnard College in New York City, Margaret Fung earned her law degree from New York University, where she was a member of the NYU Law Review, an Arthur Garfield Hays Civil Liberties Fellow and a Root-Tilden Scholar. Fung also received an honorary LL.D. from City University of New York (CUNY) Law School in 1997.

Over 10,000 Asian Americans benefit yearly from legal counseling and community programs provided by AALDEF, which is a nonpartisan organization formed in 1974 to protect and promote the civil rights of Asian Americans, through litigation, education, and legal advocacy.

Connie Chung is the first Asian-Pacific American anchor in national television. The secret to her success is just plain hard work. Connie was born on August 20, 1946, in Washington, D.C. Her father had been an officer in the Chinese Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek's intelligence agency. In the early 1940s, living conditions were terrible in Shanghai where the Chung family lived. China had been under attack by Japan for several years and there were shortages of food, and diseases were widespread. Connie was the only one out of ten children who was born in the United States.



Connie Chung

Connie Chung is an example of an outstanding woman anchor. Her hard work, intelligence, and honesty are just a few reasons that she has become one of the nation's leading television journalists.



Ellison S. Onizuka (Lieutenant Colonel, USAF) NASA Astronaut

Selected as an astronaut candidate by NASA in January 1978, he completed a 1-year training and evaluation period in August 1979. He subsequently worked on orbiter test and checkout teams and launch support crews at the Kennedy Space Center for STS-1 and STS-2. He worked on software test and checkout crew at the Shuttle Avionics and Integration Laboratory (SAIL), and has supported numerous other technical assignments ranging from astronaut crew equipment/orbiter crew compartment coordinator to systems and payload development.

Lieutenant Colonel Onizuka was a mission specialist on STS 51-L which was launched from the Kennedy Space Center, Florida, at 11:38:00 EST on January 28, 1986. The crew on board the Orbiter Challenger included the spacecraft commander, Mr. F.R. Scobee, the pilot, Commander M.J. Smith (USN), fellow mission specialists, Dr. R.E. McNair, and Dr. J.A. Resnik, as well as two civilian payload specialists, Mr. G.B. Jarvis and Mrs. S. C. McAuliffe. The STS 51-L crew died on January 28, 1986 when Challenger exploded 1 min. 13 sec. after launch.



Maya Lin

Born in 1959 in Athens, Ohio, Maya Lin catapulted into the public eye when, as a senior at Yale University, she submitted the winning design in a national competition for a Vietnam Veterans Memorial to be built in Washington, D.C. She was trained as an artist and architect, and her sculptures, parks, monuments, and architectural projects are linked by her ideal of making a place for individuals within the landscape. Lin, a Chinese-American, came from a cultivated and artistic home. Her father was the dean of fine arts at Ohio University; her mother is a professor of literature at Ohio University.

As the child of immigrants you have that sense of, "Where are you? Where's home? And trying to make a home," remarks Lin. She draws inspiration for her sculpture and architecture from culturally diverse sources, including Japanese gardens, Hopewell Indian earthen mounds, and works by American earthworks artists of the 1960s and 1970s. Her most recognizable work, the "Vietnam Veterans Memorial," allows the names of those lost in combat to speak for themselves, connecting a tragedy that happened on foreign soil with the soil of America's capital city, where it stands. Lin lives in New York and Colorado.



Michelle Kwan (Kwan Wing Shan)

Michelle Kwan is the youngest of three children in a very close knit, Chinese-American family. Michelle was only 5 years old when she and her sister Karen started taking ice skating lessons. They were inspired by their brother Ronald, who played hockey. Both girls showed early promise, and their parents made many sacrifices so that they could

have the best training possible.

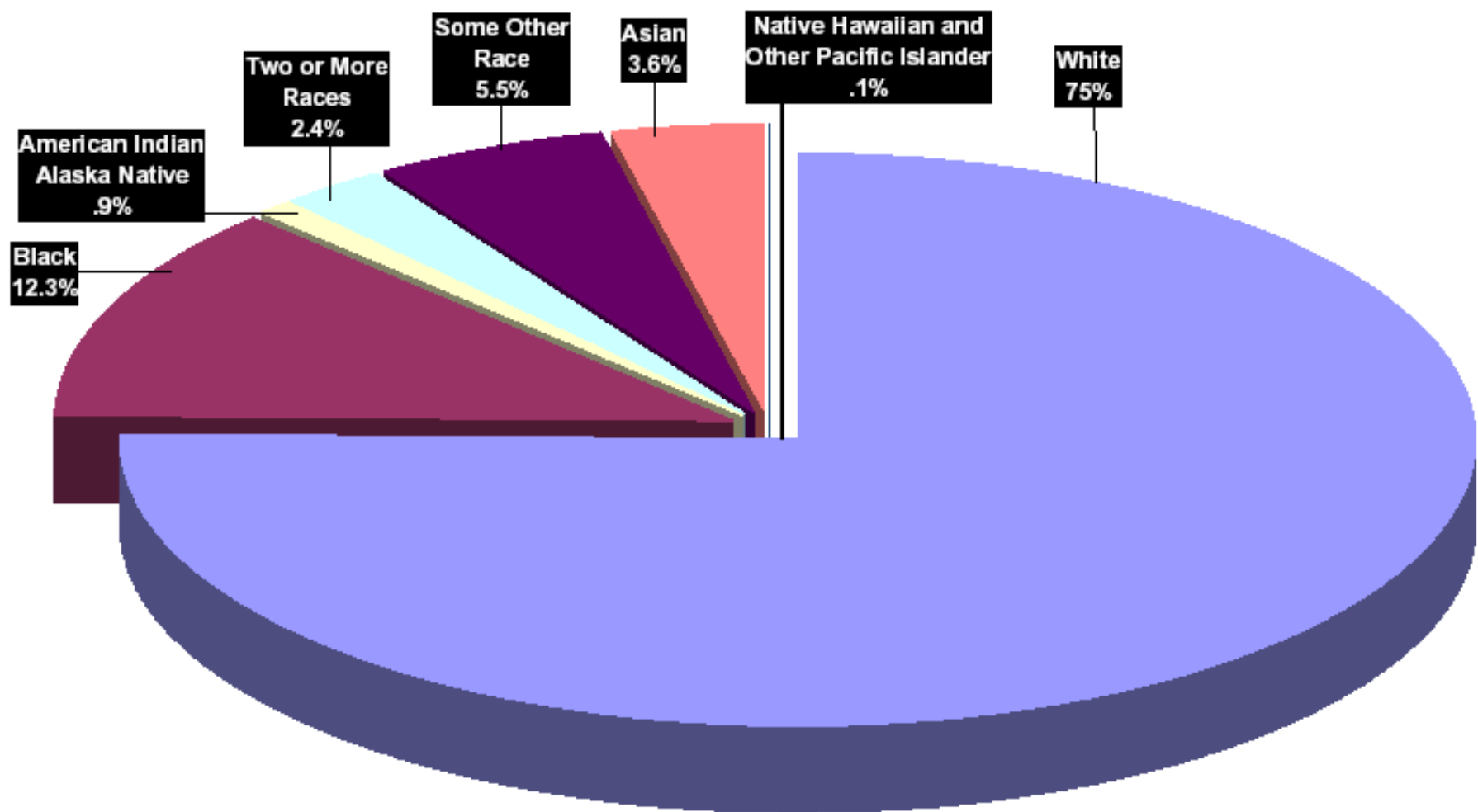
Michelle won the Junior World

Championships in 1994, when she was

13 years old.

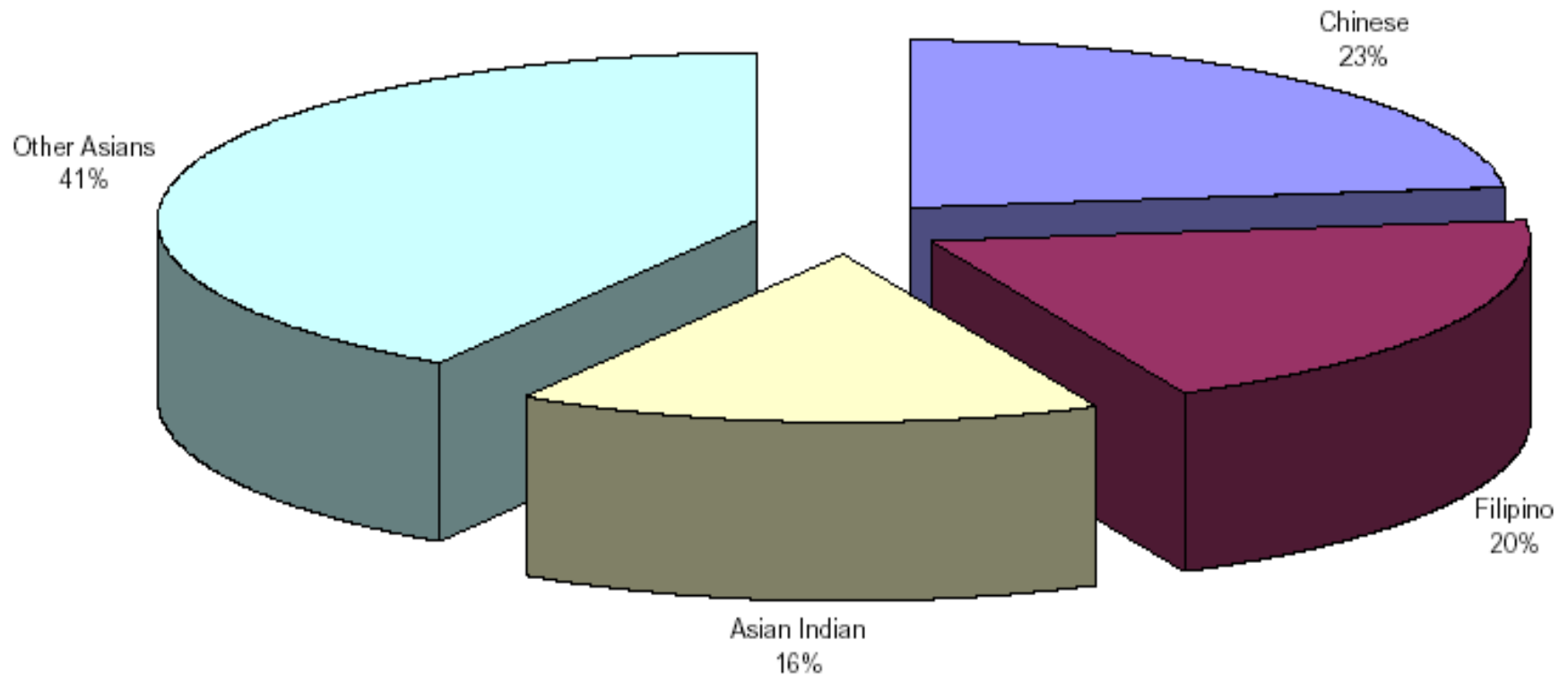
Michelle practices and works very hard on her ice skating *elements*—the jumps, spins, and footwork. But Michelle really stands out because of her *artistry*—the way she puts all the elements together to create her own unique style. She is able to make the story of the music come alive with emotion and meaning through her movements and expressions. "I want to be a legend," Michelle says. "I want to be remembered in a thousand years when skating is weird and people are doing quintuple jumps."

U.S. Demographics 2000



Census 2000

Three Largest Asian Pacific American Ethnic Groups



Sources *.....and links of interest*

<https://www.patrick.af.mil/deomi.htm>

www.house.gov/faleomavaega/spasi

[a](#)

www.plotnick.com/wtchow/rodap98.p

[df](#)

www.senate.gov/~carper/acrobat

[%20files](#)